The Sun.

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Put Men Behind the Guns.

Who can view with indifference the deplorable conditions now existing in our system of coast defences?

This nation has spent in the past twenty years $126,000,000 in providing defences of which two-thirds would be idle at the next outbreak of war for want of men behind the guns.

Congress should pass the Hull bill, and pass it promptly. No recommendation in President ROOSEVELT'S message is more urgent. No statement of the case is more significant than that which Secretary TAFT made last spring to the Senate Committee on Military Affairs when he said: "If we were called upon to go into a war we should have to double or treble our present force at once."

The men are needed behind the guns, and they are needed there now. Artillery work is team work, and to attempt to recruit suddenly in an emergency to the full force required would convert our fine artillery corps into a mob.

The Reichstag Dissolved.

On Thursday, December 13, the Reichstag was dissolved in consequence of its refusal to vote the supplementary appropriation demanded for German Southwest Africa by the Government. This is not the first time in the history of the present German Empire that this instrument of coercion has been used to break down the resistance of the popular assembly. The possibility of a resort to such an expedient shows how widely the German Constitution differs from that of Great Britain or that of the United States.

We need not say that under our Federal Constitution the President has no power to dissolve Congress, though he may convoke it in extra session. In France the President of the republic, if he can procure the consent of the Senate, may dissolve Parliament and order the election of a new Chamber of Deputies. In Great Britain and in most other countries which have adopted the parliamentary as distinguished from the presidential type of government, the power of dissolution is the complement of the responsibility of the Ministers, and theoretically is used to ascertain whether the Cabinet possesses the confidence of the nation. In the German Empire Ministerial responsibility does not exist, any more than it exists in the United States, and it seems, therefore, unreasonable that the power of dissolution should be vested in the executive and Bundesrath conjointly. Nevertheless, the voters have upheld the Imperial Government when it has applied this formidable instrument of pressure to the popular branch of the national legislature. The Reichstag has been thrice dissolved: once in 1878, when it refused to pass a bill for the repression of agitation by the Socialists; next in 1887, when it rejected a bill fixing the size of the army for seven years; and lastly in 1893, when it refused to sanction changes proposed in the military system. In each case the electors virtually said that the executive was right and the legislature wrong, for the new Reichstag accepted the plans of the Government. Thus the adjustment of the ultimate authority of the different organs of the State was postponed.

The truth is that the Reichstag is far from playing in Germany the great part which is played by the Chamber of Deputies in France. On paper the powers of the former body, like those of the latter, are great; but in practice the German assembly has not been able to turn to decisive account its nominal control of the purse. All laws, indeed, require the consent of the Reichstag, and so do the budget, all loans and all treaties that involve matters falling within the domain of legislation. But, although the Constitution declares that the budget shall be annual, the principal revenue laws are permanent and cannot be changed without the consent of the Bundesrath, or Federal Council. Then, again, the most important appropriation, that for the army, has hitherto been voted for a number of years at a time. A similar course has been pursued with reference to the navy. In the debates on the budget the Députies indulge freely in criticism of the Government, but as a rule the reductions made are unimportant, and complete rejection of an appropriation demanded has been extremely rare.

The extent to which the Reichstag is subordinated to the Bundesrath is imperfectly appreciated in the United States. Every one of the fifty-eight members of the Bundesrath has a right to sit in the Reichstag and to speak therein whenever he chooses. That is to say, the Bundesrath has some of the attributes of an imperial Cabinet, and technically interpellations in the Reichstag are addressed to the Bundesrath, though in fact they are are communicated to the Chancellor, who himself has no right to sit in the Reichstag, except as a delegate to the Bundesrath. Practically the Bundesrath has the first, as well as the last, word on almost all the laws, for the Reichstag has not succeeded in making its right of initiative in legislation very effective. By far the larger part of the statutes, as well as the budget, are prepared and first discussed by the Bundesrath. They are then sent to the Reichstag, and if passed by that body are submitted once more to the Bundesrath for approval. The Bundesrath is not only the main source of legislation, but it is also a part of the executive, enjoying a share of the power of appointment. From another point of view, it may be compared to our United States Supreme Court, for it decides disputes between the Imperial and State Governments about the interpretation of Imperial statutes. Not only has the Bundesrath far more extensive powers than the Reichstag, but it also possesses privileges withheld from the latter body. For instance, the Reichstag cannot be summoned to meet without the Bundesrath, whereas the latter can sit alone. In the Reichstag the order of business is broken off by the ending of the session, whereas in the Bundesrath it is continuous, so that matters may be taken up again at the point where they were left. We observe, lastly, that the meetings of the Bundesrath may be secret, and in fact the public is always excluded, though a brief report of the matters dealt with and the conclusions reached is published after each session.

It is evident that in the Reichstag the German people possess only the semblance of self-government. The principal organ of legislation is the Bundesrath, which represents not the people, but the sovereigns of the constituent States.

Samuel Gompers and John Mitchell.

We note with interest the continued disapproval on the part of Messrs. SAMUEL GOMPERS and JOHN MITCHELL of what they are pleased to describe as "government by injunction." Those passionate advocates of human liberty both appeared at the fifth annual meeting of the National Civic Federation, last Wednesday, and both declared themselves in no measured terms as deadly foes of the injunction. Mr. JOHN MITCHELL, indeed, went so far as to say that under circumstances of peculiar provocation he would trample the injunction under foot as a tyrannical interference with his constitutional rights.

Of course, the seeming inconsistency of this attitude, assumed by gentlemen who have consecrated themselves to freedom in its broadest and its noblest forms, is susceptible of explanation. Superficially considered, however, it will astonish the unenlightened to hear Messrs. GOMPERS and MITCHELL denouncing with such bitterness the only remaining protection of the individual in pursuit of the privileges guaranteed him by our political and social institutions. The appearance is deceptive, no doubt, but the ordinary citizen sees in the injunction merely an effort by the Government to save the lives of men who seek to support themselves and their families through the medium of honest toil. We know how it grieves Messrs. GOMPERS and MITCHELL to hear of workingmen beaten, maimed, even murdered because they accept employment. We know it because they always proclaim their sorrow on those barbarous occasions. Their hearts are always lacerated in such cases, for surely there can be no more brutal tyranny than that which would deny the poor man's right to labor for his daily bread. Nevertheless, only the inspired few who enjoy communion with Messrs. GOMPERS and MITCHELL are able to perceive in the injunction anything more or less than the agency of that liberty of which they profess to be the appointed and peculiar prophets. Some day, we feel sure, these errors will be dispelled. For the moment, however, they possess us with remarkable tenacity.

It is a great pity that Messrs. GOMPERS and MITCHELL did not find time to explain to their distinguished audience the exact manner in which and the precise extent to which "injunction" interferes with the human liberty they extol so eloquently and apostrophize with such voluble and more or less convincing vociferation. The ignorant multitude sees in it only an attempted safeguard, too often ineffectual, of the honest weak as against the murderous and ruffian strong. It amounts, or seems to amount, merely to an inhibition of lawlessness. Its ostensible function is to prevent the assemblage of ruffians and malefactors at points where non-union workmen may be assaulted, mutilated, even killed outright under circumstances which forbid the hope of identifying and punishing the criminals. Why, then, should Messrs. GOMPERS and MITCHELL denounce it with such penetrating virulence? They always claim that these abominable enormities are committed by "sympathizers," whose activities they honestly deplore. If that be true, as of course it must be, why do they not cooperate with the agents of humane and civilized government in the effort to eliminate them?

It is inconceivable that gentlemen of such high character and altruistic pretensions are demanding liberty and protection only for those workingmen who pay tribute to the unions, and incidentally to their salaries and perquisites.

Our Immediate Work in Cuba.

The Cuban situation is working itself out, rather than being worked out. The line between the different interests becomes clearer from week to week. There is a growing appreciation of the fact that the real key to the entire Cuban situation is economic and not political. Until that fact is clearly recognized and is made the basis of action there can be no progress in Cuba.

The Cuban people are practically divisible into two groups. On one hand there stand those, heavily preponderant numerically, who want peace and order, industry and prosperity. On the other hand there stands a collection of aspirants for political jobs and the emoluments pertaining thereto. The success of the latter crowd gives no assurance whatever of political or industrial stability for the country. On the contrary, it would be little short of a guarantee of renewed disturbance. A proper protection for the peace and order people is imperative for the welfare of Cuba.

The purchase of a temporary peace by the bribery of clamorous politicos, with official positions as the price of their quietude, should find no place in our policy. The success of the revolutionary party, and the necessary recognition of some of its leaders by the Peace Commissioners, left some of them with a mistaken notion that they acquired certain rights as a result of the experience. There is no reason whatever, in law or in morals, for such phantasms, and it is the duty of the authorities to correct them, amicably if possible, or forcibly if necessary. The obligation assumed by the United States through its intervention and expressed by the proclamation was not that we should put the Liberals in power and get out immediately, but that we stay "long enough to restore order and peace and public confidence."

Order and peace have been restored, though it is by no means sure that they are even fairly established. They rest chiefly on a foundation of rifle barrels. These being withdrawn, the superstructure would perhaps collapse within twenty-four hours. Public confidence is not at all restored. Property owners who are not actually alarmed are more or less apprehensive. They do not trust the leaders of either party. They have no more confidence in CAPOTE, ANDRADE, DOLZ, PARRAGA and other prominent Moderates than they have in ZAYAS, GOMEZ, GUERRA, LOYNAZ and other men prominent in the Liberal party. A premature transfer of power to either party would be fatal to Cuba and lamentably disastrous to our own interests.

Although denied by some in Cuba and by others in this country, it is still conceivable that the Cubans are not entirely destitute of the ability to carry on "a stable government, capable of maintaining order and observing its international obligations, insuring peace and tranquillity and the security of its citizens as well as our own." But, until there is some better assurance of this ability than anything which appears in a selfish scramble for office and official salaries, the United States must keep a firm hand on Cuba.

Our most important immediate work would seem to be to impress this fact upon the minds of both the politicians and the property owners.

The Gender of a Fountain.

The following letters show a deep and rational interest in Latin grammar and Caledonian philanthropy:

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Is it Fons Carnegianus or Carnegiana or Carnegianum? The question is occasioned by THE SUN'S designating Mr. CARNEGIE'S gift of a lake of water to the Princeton University as Fons Carnegiana. Is this a sample of Princeton University Latin, or is THE SUN'S Cicero responsible for the feminine termination?

"When I went to school the preceptor took considerable pains to inculcate that fons and pons and mons and a long list of other Latin nouns are of the masculine kind. After the lapse of thirty and more years, however, my memory may be at fault, or philologians may have discovered that fons is after all a feminine. The high schoolers of my acquaintance can throw no light on the subject. In these progressive days they no longer bother over such minutiæ as the gender of nouns; they are too busy reading authors—with the help of a crib or a pons asinorum, as our unfeeling instructor called such friendly aids.

"One solution suggested was that if the Carnegian pool contains only ordinary vulgar water, it is a soft drink fount and must be content with the feminine appellative Carnegiana; but if it is a lake of firewater, it is decidedly masculine, Carnegianus; but if a compound of both, neuter, Carnegianum.

"Now, what is it? SIMPLEX.
"THE BRONX, December 14."

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I noticed in your paper this morning the caption "Fons Carnegiana" as, I presume, an appropriate title of the Laird of Skibo's gift to Princeton University. Is it possible that the masculine spirit of the Laird could for a moment entertain the idea of handing over a delicate female thing to the tender mercies of Princeton? Perish the thought!
"BROOKLYN, December 11. IGNOTUS."

"Fons" is undoubtedly masculine in Latin, as a well known passage from HORACE shows:

"O Fons Schibustæ, splendidior vitro,
Dulci digne mero."

Which Father PROUT or somebody has translated thus:

"O spring of Skeeboo, whose sheen surpasses
The brightest and best double extra plate glasses
Of Pittsburg town—
Drink her down!"

In Princeton, too, the masculinity of "fons" has never been brought in question, so far as we know. The phrase "Fons Carnegiana" is Priscian more than a little scratched, yet 'twill serve. We applied it not to that lake with which the beneficence of Mr. CARNEGIE has dowered the university, but to that beneficence. Beautiful, constant, modest, it could be expressed in female terms only. We love to think of that fount as a Lady Bountiful, or at least a cornucopia, feminine therefore by attraction, by sympathy, by privilege and unchartered right, a fair and expensive she. A grace, a goddess, the muse of triumphant Democracy, fortune, liberality, benevolence, wisdom, eloquence, the fairy godmother who bestows library buildings and taxes upon a grateful country: surely the Carnegian spring of right ought to be feminine. No river god of more than doubtful character, no mere and common genius, no old man of the sea, no Triton with his wreathéd horn; not of any swaggering major or minor divinity does the world think when it thinks of the Carnegian fount. All sweet and kindly shapes of nymph and goddess join hands and dance around her:

"Before her always Fame goes a-trumpeting,
And Plenty signing checks ambidextrously;
The people weeping rivers of gratitude
Make Lake Carnegie."

Turn a protesting back on Latin grammar, dead and damned. *Acus, fædus, funus, genus* and all the other magical patter of ANDREWS and STODDARD and HARKNESS and the rest of 'em, away from it as from *strepitum Acherontis avari*, the racket of plutocratic Pittsburg. Our oblation is due not to gender, but to the golden numbers of doniferous ANDREW, to the waters of wealth and good advice, to the lady of Carnegie Lake.

Let "Fons Carnegiana" stand, irregular but great. We scorned to use "fontana"; no low Latin for so high a theme. Besides, "Carnegiana" is shorter than "Carnegianus" by a letter. The Steel King is above grammar as above spelling; and if he can meddle with the spelling of a living language, we can amuse ourselves with the gender of a single word in a tongue which many people regard as dead.

Veiled is the light of Morningside, but a glimmer or two gets "thru." Professor BRANDER MATTHEWS, although grieved by the brutal conduct of the Congress, plucks up heart. He sees the wave of spelling reform swell and advance. He says that signatures to the agreement to use the simplified spelling "are coming in at the rate of 1,000 or 2,000 a month." Mark the careless confidence of "1,000 or 2,000." What is a thousand or so in calculations so vast? At the rate of 2,000 a month there will be 2,400,000 simple spellers in the United States in 2006. There are 11,000 already if Professor MATTHEWS'S mathematics are as strong as his phonetics. Let the good work go on! Our old friend the Hon. ERVING WINSLOW of Boston, whose success in getting signatures to the petition against the ratification of the peace treaty with Spain is as historical as some histories, ought to have charge of those spelling agreements.

We will put McCARREN on rollers and give him the skidoo.—*The Hon.* FINDY CONNERS, *chairman of the Democratic State committee.*

The singular thing is that two such pure minded and unselfish statesmen cannot sink their differences and combine for the welfare of the Democratic party and their own.

The economists and the lawyers, the statesmen, philanthropists and sociologists have spoken at the meeting of the National Civic Federation; and much wisdom was dropped. A frank or cynical person, Mr. N. W. MEAGHER, expressed this unsympathetic opinion:

"The reason we rail against JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER is because he has succeeded. All the world is a confidence game, and we are only players. I have come to learn that and to learn that Mr. ROCKEFELLER has played the game only according to its rules, and that we are sore because he has been the most successful."

This must be the plea of the devil's advocate. The world is a bunch of altruists; the reason why everybody who is not rich is not rich is because he despised wealth; and Mr. ROCKEFELLER is the "Aunt Sally" for all the clubs because he has more hair than brains.

The English suffragettes continue to show heroic temper and quality. Thursday night they had a fierce fight with the London police and were overpowered only by numbers. If Parliament is determined to reject their demand for woman suffrage, Parliament will be wise to form them into a military force, to serve, of course, outside of England. When they become fully conscious of their own strength they will take the House of Parliament by storm, pluck off the Speaker's wig, and chase the Chancellor of the Exchequer into the Thames.

Asking Too Much.

From the Minneapolis Tribune.

The President asks from Congress, not only seriously but with great earnestness, the power to dismiss officers of the navy by Executive order without process of law. It would be a great misfortune to remove or relax any of the safeguards that protect American soldiers and sailors from ruin of their career by an arbitrary act. These officers are not political driftwood, tossed into place by one election and washed out by another. They have trained themselves for a life career and are entitled to all the safeguards of law for its permanence.

Is This the Coming Issue?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Secretary of State Root in his speech at the annual dinner of the Pennsylvania Society spoke in such a frank manner of the necessity of greater Federal control that the course of events to come seems more clear. Yet it is to be doubted if the average American has as much as an inkling of the portentous problem which the citizens of this country must soon face. The seeds are being sown and there must be a harvest, good or evil.

It would be interesting to trace the exact origin of this intended departure in our method of government. It would be even more interesting if the cause could be traced to events or to ambitions. We have other intricate problems, but they will all be overshadowed by this of State rights. It will finally rend this country as nothing else ever has. There will be a decisive victory either for those advocating centralization or for those who believe in the strength of our present Constitution.

Sweep away State rights, and individual rights are next in order. Where will it stop? It is dangerous ground we are treading; but far better to fight the issue out than to allow advocates of centralization to make such headway that there will be no turning back, even if we would. Centralization is more easily made than taken away.

Our country is great and strong, but our mettle is to be tested in a manner that does not allow us to be unprepared. G. F.
NEW YORK, December 14.

Gastronomic Geography.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The other morning I breakfasted with some Northern friends uptown and they had corned pork and eggs for breakfast. They called it "cawn po'k and aigs," and said it was a Southern dish. I have eaten breakfast in a good many Southern States, but that was the first "cawn po'k and aigs" I have come across. Can THE SUN tell me where in the South the "cawn po'k and aigs" belt is? INQUIRER.
NEW YORK, December 13.

Basis of Affection.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Do you imagine that the time will ever come in this country when a large contingent of our citizens will say of Mr. Roosevelt, "We love him for the mistakes he has made"? M. T.
HARLEM, December 14.

From an Old Hunks.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Has it occurred to any of your readers yet that Santa becomes Satan by an easy transposition of letters?
NEW YORK, December 14. GIFTER.

Quite a Surprise.

From the Lebanon Pioneer.

The report of Mrs. Seaton Ferrell's broken ankle at Miles Ottinger's last week was false. Mrs. Ferrell was not even over there at that time, and it was quite a surprise for both parties when they received the news.

Evidence.

Knicker—Was the prisoner a married man?
Bocker—I guess so. When informed that anything he might say would be used against him he said he was used to that.

Sic Transit.

One more unfortunate,
So the news saith,
By foes importunate
Done to its death.

Simplified spelling is
Dead, they declare—
Up the fear welling is:
"Young, and so fair!"

Faded its glory now,
Lately the rage:
Ended the story now,
Turned the last page.

Sadly our Roosevelt—
Oh, deed abhorrent!
And, oh, the woes he felt—
Signed the death warrant.

Congress exultingly—
Shedding no tear—
The corpse insultingly
Tossed on its bier.

One more unfortunate,
Done to its death
By foes importunate,
Weary of breath!

E. T. NELSON.

THE INHERITANCE TAX.

Unemotional Remarks on the President's Long Range Recommendation.

From an interview with Representative McCall in the Springfield Republican.

The recommendation in the President's message of a graduated inheritance tax has perhaps the effect of raising a moot question. The President does not state that we need more revenue; indeed, we are now having a comfortable surplus. If the revenue were needed the proposition would be practical. As it is now the suggestion is not fiscal, but social. It is apparently not to raise a needed revenue, but for the socialistic purpose of limiting the size of fortunes. I shall not discuss whether it is wise at the present time for the national Government to enter on that field, only so far as to say that if the plan were once embarked upon there would be an inevitable tendency to lower the limit of size of the inheritances subject to the high rates. How far this tendency would go is of course a mere matter of conjecture. But viewed as a fiscal proposition an inheritance tax is undoubtedly an unobjectionable way of raising revenue, although I do not mean to say that it should be employed for purposes of national revenue. Under our system the most expensive functions of government are exercised by the States and municipalities. They bear the enormously expensive burdens of public education, protection against fire, construction of roads, maintaining police forces and courts which have jurisdiction over far the greater number of controversies, while the chief function of the national Government is to provide for common defence, a provision which nature had already generously made for us by giving as bulwarks the two oceans and part of the advantage of which we inconsiderately threw away. Before the Spanish war the cost of the national Government, not including post office expenditures, was about $5 per capita, and there is no need for material increase over that cost. The States are prohibited from levying customs duties. That fountain of revenue is entirely reserved to the national Government, and they must have some important sources to which they may resort in order to carry on their work. The inheritance tax is a very proper instrument for the State to employ. Of course, if the national Government should also levy an inheritance tax and raise even twice the amount it now raises by taxation, there is no doubt many ways would be devised for expending it.

"I do not, of course, assume to more than hint at some of the important considerations which we must bear in mind in deciding whether we shall impose this tax. But I think the question should be carefully studied. We are having an era of ill considered legislation. The prevention of rebates, for instance, was put forth as the ground for commission rate making when it is now perfectly manifest that there is no logical connection between the two subjects, and that the statute books already contained a law against rebates which only needed enforcement to prove its great efficiency. A rational economic discussion is what is wanted, and especially do we need to divest ourselves of the notion for the time being that the world is full of graft which it is the purpose of the law to do away with. If we approach the question from that hysterical plane we shall reach no sound economic conclusion.

Coffee and Cakes for Cold Firemen.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* You recently commended the plan for providing hot coffee for the firemen as being "for the good of the service and for the public benefit."

It may be of interest to state that the Church Temperance Society, through its women's auxiliary, took the initiative in this matter five or six years ago at the request of Fire Commissioner Winthrop Gray. A special coffee van was built, equipped with insulated tanks for keeping the coffee hot for twenty-four hours, and has been kept exclusively for the use of the firemen. By arrangement with the Fire Department the van has been summoned by telephone whenever needed. After the fire at the Seventy-first Regiment armory five years ago, the chaplain of the department wrote to the secretary of this society:

"I take great pleasure in conveying to you the keen appreciation and gratitude of the firemen for the generosity of your admirable society. The Thanksgiving fire was the worst that has occurred in years. The next day the men were compelled to stand watch for twelve hours in the cold, raw wind. It being Friday, none of them could eat meat, and the presence of the coffee van was more than a blessing. Deputy Chief Duane told me that never in his long experience was there such a gratifying absence of signs of liquor, and he attributed it largely to the good coffee."

It is a matter of sincere congratulation to this society that the plan which it inaugurated five years ago has so commended itself to the officers and men of the Department that it is now proposed to make the coffee van part of its permanent equipment. Brooklyn has already a van of its own, and it is hoped that the plan will be adopted in all large cities throughout the country.

ROBERT GRAHAM,
General Secretary Church Temperance Society.
NEW YORK, December 14.

Police Caps in 1854.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* When the New York police force a few weeks ago appeared on the streets with their new caps, replacing the old helmets, it was the impression on the part of the people of this city that it was the first time in the history of the department that the members had ever worn that style of headgear.

I find in a copy of *Gleason's Pictorial* of the date of January 7, 1854, an illustrated article on a new style of uniform that had just been ordered to be worn by the members of the police force of this city. The uniform, with the exception of the headgear, was almost the same as that worn to-day. The headgear was the same as the caps that are now worn, the only difference being that instead of the crown of the cap slanting back as it does now, it was perfectly flat. The capes that the police now wear were also worn on the caps that were ordered fifty-two years ago. The chief of police of that date, the captains and lieutenants, now known as sergeants, were ordered to wear helmets of the exact style now worn by the members of the Fire Department when fighting fires.

CHARLES T. CUNNINGHAM.
NEW YORK, December 14.

Peaceful Mexican Indians.

From Modern Mexico.

The simple minded, patient, docile Indian of Mexico is eminently peaceful. Bountiful nature and perpetual summer combine to palliate his improvidence. He cannot see the necessity of laying up anything for a rainy day. It rains half the days in Mexico anyhow, but that only makes the mangoes grow larger and cheaper. If he has no tortillas to-day, some of his neighbors have, and they will gladly share, for conditions may be reversed to-morrow.

These Mexican Indians make the best and the poorest servants in the world. Their greatest charm from this standpoint is their perfect appreciation of their position. Always polite, never presuming, with hat in hand, it is always "your servant" and "with your permission." In the household they ask a half holiday once a fortnight with never a word of complaint when working hours last from daylight to midnight.

The Mexican Indian does not want to fight. All he asks is to be let alone. His politeness and affectionate nature are inborn. His love for children is particularly marked. It is a common sight to see a laborer in the street with but two pieces of white cotton clothing to his back, or his name, stop a woman with a baby in her arms, and holding the child's face between both his hands deliver a resounding smack and chuck it under the chin. And in the same unconscious and entirely unaffected manner will a young man take his sombrero from his head and reverently kiss the hand of some ancient relative in a tattered dress when he encounters her in the crowded thoroughfare.

At 11:30 P. M.

Cholly—What would happen if an immovable body met an irresistible force?

Stella—That is just what occurs when you call on me.

What He Needed.

Stella—It is so hard to know what to give a man.
Bella—Just give him time, dear.

KING BEHANZIN.

How a Free Born American Basked in the Royal Smile in Seagirt Martinique.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I have read to-day that Behanzin, King of Dahomey, is dead, and as he was one of the few kings who have shaken hands with me I feel that it is up to me to offer his shade some testimonial of publicity in a country which does not recognize royalty publicly. Privately we are only human.

Four years ago I happened to be at Fort de France, Martinique, a French West Indian possession; and in looking for sights I was referred to the palace of King Behanzin of Dahomey and the King himself, who was just then and had been for some years the involuntary guest of France on the island. With another free born American citizen I hired a hack and we hied ourselves to the palace, situated on a hill overlooking the town and the roadstead. We didn't speak French and our negro driver didn't speak American—the idea of a darky not speaking our language seemed utterly preposterous—and we hoed a hard row to find that palace. We never should have found it if a hidalgo, or something highly decorated and extremely polite, hadn't dismounted from his horse and showed us the way from the high road to the royal gates. He was no king's retainer, either; simply a West Indian gentleman.

Leaving our conveyance, we climbed a side road which led from a rickety paling fence up to the main entrance of the palace. This was a frame cottage of the ordinary tropical build, mostly windows and doors, with posts enough to hold them in place, and its rental value might have been $7.98 a month. Behanzin had grown so rantankerous in Africa that the peace of that continent called for his exile, and the Dahomeyans were compelled to let him go. There was nobody around the palace to look after our interests, but we headed for the portcullis, which opened on a veranda, with the intention of giving the front door a resounding knock. But before this could happen a bright young darky, as black as a pair of patent leathers and attired in the gray uniform of a cadet, came from the kitchen side of the palace and met us in the dooryard. He spoke fairly good English and said he was the King's son. Black as he was, and though I have Southern color prejudices, and also look upon royalty as effete poppycock, I surprised myself greatly by repeating in a half awed whisper: "The King's son?" He was very polite and told us that although it was after reception hours he would see if the King his father would not receive us. In the meantime I had some little talk with him, and he told me that King Behanzin didn't like living in the West Indies and wanted to go home. This I thought was base ingratitude, because France was paying all his expenses and allowing his seven wives—we did hear it was seventeen, and perhaps it was—to cheer him in his loneliness. The Prince himself appeared to be a very nice boy of about 19, and he certainly was affable—for a Prince royal.

He told us to go up on the veranda and he would go around and inform the King his father, who would come to the shuttered door to meet us. Within a few minutes we heard a rustling through the shutters, mingled with the giggling of women, and presently the door opened cautiously and King Behanzin stuck his hand out to give us the shake. He did not come outside, nor did he open the door wide. But he was smiling and gracious and shook hands with us as if he were running for office. I talked to him as though he could understand, and he kept nodding and smiling with an unlighted pipe in his mouth having a bowl about as big as a walnut and a stem two feet long.

The King was as black as the Prince and was about 50 years of age, with gray among his curls, and regular billygoat whiskers, also streaked with gray. His attire consisted of a blue silk, gold embossed tablecloth or window curtain, or something cut to the pattern of such, and his arm was bare to the shoulder, which was as much of him as got through the door crack. One peculiarity I observed was the nail on his little finger. It was three inches or more in length and twisted off down toward his hand in a graceful spiral. I fancy he was proud of it. All the time we were talking to him the women back of the shutter were giggling and having the time of their lives.

The interview, by the Prince's request, was soon over, and wishing the good King Behanzin a speedy return to his home in Dahomey, we shook hands once more and took up our line of departure, the King shutting the door abruptly and thus obviating the necessity of our backing away, as is the custom in royal circles usually. The Prince walked with us part of the way down the hill again. As we passed the side of the palace some four or five ladies of color, with their kinky hair curled up into horns four or five inches high, stood in the yard giggling and watching us. They were also black and shiny and were anywhere from twenty to thirty years younger than their royal master and husband. I think from the giddy manner of them that they would have risked the royal displeasure by flirting with us if the Prince hadn't been with us. I forgot to say their royal robes were of calico, with no furbelows.

When I heard later that the King had been sent back to his native land I was glad, and now that he is dead I am sorry he was not spared longer to make up for the time lost in Martinique, where he was not happy.

NEW YORK, December 13. W. J. L.

TAR HEEL BRILLIANCE.

Glittering Social Splendors Glitteringly Described.

From the Wilson Times.

The elegant home of that sparkling little jewel Miss Elsie Moore, who is as pretty as a picture and as bright as an icicle and as pure as a dew drop and as sweet as a flower, was a sparkling scene of radiant loveliness last night, for this beautiful little maiden and her handsome and magnificently formed sister had invited a number of their friends to assemble in honor of the beautiful and bewitching Miss Neda Taylor and the charming and fascinating Miss Rosalie Setzer, who are now dispensing their charms and witcheries in Wilson, and making so many hearts drunk with the inebriating potations of their intoxicating graces.

It was indeed a scene of rarest loveliness, for many of Wilson's brightest gems were there in all of their richest lustre, and were rivalling in their brilliancy the exquisite beamings of those resplendent jewels in whose honor this delightful entertainment was given. As said above, it was a brilliant scene of joyous festivity, for the lovely faces of our glorious little maidens were as radiant as the pure and stainless gleamings of a crystal rubbed over in the glittering polish of shimmering sunbeams, and burnished with the dazzling strikes of quivering lightning. And as these merry maidens, with sparkling eyes and beaming faces and musical laughter, moved to and fro like symphonies of grace, they poured into that channel of enjoyment a stream of silver light, and tinted each ripple in that joyous current with a sunbeam of brightest cheer.

And we fancy that as our handsome and gallant young lads looked down into the radiant deeps of such sparkling eyes—eyes whose faintest glimmer would make the glistening skies of blooming midnight pale with envy turn and no more let their feeble torches burn—yea, we fancy that these young boys felt that Cupid had come to their young hearts on a mission as sweet as odors come when vernal breezes and passionate sunbeams woo and kiss the budding flowers and make them breathe the fragrance of springtime's richest bowers.

Ironquill to Mark Twain.

From the Topeka Capital.

The other day Eugene F. Ware finished reading a volume by Mark Twain. He wrote to Mr. Clemens under date of December 1 this letter:

"DEAR MR. TWAIN: I picked up your last volume. I read it clear through from cover to cover; it was like a bobtailed flush—I could not lay it down. Yours sincerely, E. F. WARE."

From 21 Fifth avenue, New York city, Mr. Clemens answered back under date of December 6 as follows:

"DEAR MR. WARE: I am an old brass bound, copper riveted, fire assayed Presbyterian, with seventy-one years experience in unworldliness, and I don't understand your metaphor, but I know it was intended as a compliment and I make it cordially welcome. Sincerely yours. MARK."

A Sociological Query.

All other things blow loud their horns
When they in public roam;
Pray, why do new shoes never squeak
Until you wear them home?

NEW BOOKS.

A Gambler of Parts and Heart.

The hero of Randall Parrish's story of "Bob Hampton of Placer" (A. C. McClurg & Co., Chicago) was a gambler. Since Bret Harte's stories, and indeed for a time longer, it has been known that gamblers may have interesting and noble qualities. In the opening part of this tale, just before the Sioux made their characteristic attack, Bob was talking literature with that fine old soldier Sergeant Wyman of the Eighteenth Infantry, who had been in the service for thirty years. We read that "Hampton, through the medium of easy conversation, early discovered in the sergeant an intelligent mind, possessing some knowledge of literature. They had been discussing books with rare enthusiasm, and the former had drawn from the concealment of an inner pocket a diminutive copy of 'The Merchant of Venice,' from which he was reading aloud a disputed passage," when, just as they entered "the yawning mouth of a black cañon," the Sioux let fly.

There were sixteen in the party, and the story describes vividly just what happened. The dark rocks of the defile flamed red as the Indians discharged their volley. "It was like a plunge from heaven into hell." "Wyman's stricken arm dripped blood." Bob dropped his Shakespeare and fired his revolver right and left. He did things besides, so that afterward the sergeant had occasion to say: "Either you're the coolest devil I've met during thirty years of soldiering or else the craziest. Who are you, anyhow? I half believe you might be Bob Hampton of Placer." Bob assented, and in further speech cast further illumination upon what must be considered an interesting character. Said Bob: "A fine state of affairs, isn't it, when a pleasant spoken, pleasant mannered gentleman, such as I surely am—university graduate, by all the gods, the nephew of a United States Senator, and acknowledged to be the greatest exponent of scientific poker in this territory—should be obliged hastily to change his chosen place of abode because of the threat of an ignorant and depraved mob. Ever have a rope dangled in front of your eyes, sergeant, and a gun barrel biting into your cheek at the same time? Accept my word for it, the experience is trying on the nerves. Ran a perfectly square game, too, and those ducks knew it; but there's no true sporting spirit left in this Territory any more."

The story goes on to tell of the subsequent experiences of Bob Hampton; how he saved old Gillis's chit of a girl, who was only 15; how he talked up to the Rev. Mr. Wynkoop when it was proposed to take the girl away from him (he calls Mr. Wynkoop a "snivelling hypocrite" and a "little creeping Presbyterian parson," and exclaimed indignantly to him, "You want me to shake her!"); how he knocked Red Slavin down at the end of his last game of cards; how Custer's last fight was fought; how at the last something happened that was not the red strife of battle, and that may be signified and epitomized in the pleasant, brief quotation "their lips met." An eventful, vigorous story that will be welcomed by plenty of readers.

Black Roderick and His Bride.

Black Earl Roderick went about always with a frowning brow. Everybody was afraid of him. It is curious that he should have been loved by the gentle maiden that he wedded in so rude a manner. How this wedding was accomplished and what bitter consequences attended it is told with imagination and effectively, partly in prose and partly in rhyme, by Dora Sigerson in "The Story and Song of Black Roderick" (Harper & Bro.). The unlovely Earl rode out of his gray castle at dawn. The most reckless could not have guessed that it was his wedding day.

It was the Black Earl Roderick
Who rode toward the south:
The frown was heavy on his brow,
The sneer upon his mouth.

The bramble tripped him and the bee stung him as he rode. Beyond question the father and mother of the maiden had good reason to pity their child. He strode sneering into the banquet hall.

He gave scant greeting to the throng,
He waved the guests aside:
"Now haste, for I, Earl Roderick,
Will wait long for no bride."

The ceremony was over in short order. The pair rode away together, she before him on his horse. He spoke no word to her, "though she fluttered weeping upon his breast." In his heart and to himself he said: "Not upon thy hand did I hope to place my golden ring. I have put my own true love aside, to keep the clans together, and wedding thee thus have I been false to the desires of my heart, so do I turn from thee who are my bride." In his castle he left her alone, and she wept and pined because she loved him. He came to be sorry when it was too late.

He looked into the deep wood green,
But nothing there did see;
He looked into the still water
Beneath, all white, lay she.

He drew her from her cold, cold bed,
And kissed her cheek and chin;
Loosed from his neck his silken cloak,
To wrap her body in.

He took her up in his two arms—
His grief was deep and wild;
He knelt beside her on the sod,
And sorrowed like a child.

But this was not the end. Her spirit came back. The evil one appeared upon the scene. It says in one place: "But Roderick, sick and eager for the sight of his bride, flung open the door and was seized by the evil one and carried away. Now, the spirit of the little bride followed the horrible coach that contained her love, even to the flaming gates of hell, and there the evil one stopped and looked upon her with desire." He offered an infamous bargain. Of course he was circumvented. The little book has decorated margins and is handsomely made.

Brunetière on Balzac.

All who love French letters regretted the death last week of Ferdinand Brunetière of the French Academy, at an age when French writers are usually in their prime. The regret will be increased on reading the last book from his pen, issued as he was dying, the "Honoré de Balzac" of the "French Men of Letters" series (J. B. Lippincott Company), as brilliant a piece of literary criticism as has appeared in a score of years. In the long series of criticisms and articles that he contributed to the *Revue des Deux Mondes* there was room often enough to dissent from M. Brunetière's judgments, especially in matters outside the domain of literature; there was no resisting, however, the charm of that style that is becoming a lost art in France.

He has left no more brilliant piece of work than this "Balzac." It is a model of what a short literary monograph should be, and more than that. Somehow or other when a Frenchman has mastered a subject it seems to become a part of him. He can talk about it with thorough knowledge, without betraying the slightest pedantry, as is inevitable with an English or German writer with the same knowledge. Brunetière had his Balzac as his fingers' ends,